

In Spirit and Truth – Giving II Cor. 9:6-11

Thesis: To encourage each other to give the best that we can to the Lord.

Introduction:

This is one topic that many in the church do not like to hear about for several reasons.

- 1) Every time it is talked about, it is a direct challenge to give more money.
- 2) Many think that the preacher only talks about this topic because he is greedy and wants more money.

I. God has always expected His people to give.

A. The idea of “tithing” predated the law of Moses.

1. **Gen. 14:17-20**
 - a. Abraham and 318 of his trained servants rescue Lot from the kings that attacked Sodom.
 - b. After this victory, Melchizedek, the “king of Salem” and “the priest of God Most High” blesses Abraham.
 - c. Abraham, in turn, gives Melchizedek a tithe of the spoils that he had collected (14:20).
2. **Gen. 28:22** (Jacob’s vow at Bethel) - *And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God’s house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You.*

B. Israel was required to give a tithe of all that they possessed.

1. **Lev. 27:30-32** (God’s command to Moses to give to the people) - *And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD’S. It is holy to the LORD. {31} If a man wants at all to redeem any of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it. {32} And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD.*
2. **Num. 18:21-28**
 - a. God speaks to Aaron and Moses concerning the tithes that Israel was to offer.
 - b. All of the tithes that the people gave were to go to the tribe of Levi because they did not receive an inheritance of land in the Promised Land (18:21-24).
 - c. However, of the tithes that they received, the Levites were to offer a tenth (tithe) back to the Lord (18:25-28).
 - d. In other words, they had to pay a tithe of the tithe.
3. There are also several other passages in the Pentateuch that deal with the command to tithe.

C. Tithing is seen throughout the Old Testament.

1. **I Chr. 31:4-12**
 - a. Hezekiah commanded the people to offer their tithes.

- b. The people brought so much that they had to prepare extra rooms in the house of the Lord to store the tithes.
- 2. **Neh. 10:35-38**
 - a. In part of the covenant that the people made upon their return from captivity, the people vow to bring their tithes to the house of the Lord upon their return from captivity.
 - b. They brought the firstfruits of everything to the Lord (of the ground, fruit of trees, sons, cattle, herds and flocks).

II. There is an attitude with our giving (9:6-7).

- A. We give liberally (9:6).
 - 1. We should not hold back in our giving.
 - a. **II Cor. 8:1-4**
 - 1) The churches of Macedonia were liberal in their giving.
 - 2) They gave “beyond their ability” (8:3).
 - b. **Rom. 12:8** - “...he who gives, with liberality;”
 - 2. The early church was liberal in their giving.
 - a. **Acts 2:44-45**
 - b. **Acts 4:34-35**
 - c. They sold their lands and possessions so that others would not go without.
- B. We give willfully (9:7).
 - 1. No one forces us to give.
 - a. We give as we have purposed in our heart.
 - b. We do not give because we have to.
 - c. “God loves a cheerful giver.”
 - 2. We must give back to God because we want to.
 - a. **II Cor. 8:12** - For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.
 - b. Remember the widow’s two mites.
 - 1) **Lk. 21:3-4** - So He said, “Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; {4} for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had.”
 - 2) The widow gave willfully of all that she had; while the rich men gave only what they would not miss.
 - 3. One of the things that will hinder our willful giving is materialism.
 - a. On numerous occasions, Jesus warns of materialism.
 - b. **Mt. 6:19-21** - Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; {20} but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. {21} For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- c. **Lk. 12:15** - And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”
 - 1) Then Jesus tells the Parable of the Rich Fool.
 - d. When we are not concerned with material possessions, we will be able to give liberally.
- C. Many times the question is asked, “Do I have to tithe today?”
1. Brethren, this is a terrible question to ask because it demonstrates an attitude of wanting to give as little as possible to the Lord.
 - a. We should be asking, “How much can I give to the Lord?”
 - b. Remember, we must have the proper attitude in our giving.
 - c. It is very true that God never put a specific percentage on how much we should give under the new law.
 - d. However, do you think that God would expect His people today (who live under a new, perfect covenant) to give less than those who lived under an old, imperfect covenant?
 2. Consider this: What if God gave you ten times the amount you contributed on Sunday?
 - a. Add a zero to the amount you gave today.
 - b. Would you be satisfied with receiving this amount each week?
 3. In reality, our giving is a test of our faith.
 - a. Do we give liberally?
 - b. Do we give willfully?
 4. Would God be pleased with our giving?

III. We give because of what God has done for us (9:8-11, 15).

- A. God abundantly gives us the things that we need for this life.
 1. God is able to give us these good things (9:8).
 2. God has promised to give us these blessings (9:9-11).
 - a. **Mt. 6:33** - But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.
 - b. **II Pet. 1:3** - as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,
 - c. **Js. 1:17** - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.
 - d. **Mal. 3:8-10** (God promises to bless those who give properly) - “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. {9} You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. {10} Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.”

- B. Most of all, God has given us Christ.
1. There is no way that we could repay God for this gift.
 2. **Rom. 5:6** - For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.
 3. **I Pet. 1:19-21** - [We are redeemed] with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. {20} He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you {21} who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Conclusion:

The Corinthians excelled in giving for one simple reason: “they first gave themselves to the Lord” (**II Cor. 8:5**). This is the only way that we will excel in our giving.

Our giving is perhaps the best determiner of our faithfulness to God because no one knows if we are giving properly except God.

The treasurer may know how much we give, but he does not know how much we make.

Our boss may know how much we make, but not how much we give.

In all aspects of worship, we can fake sincerity.

Singing

Listening to preaching

Prayers

Lord's Supper

However, when it comes to our giving, we cannot “fake” it.